



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF
Health
Keeping Your Hometown Healthy

**Center for Local Public Health &
 Center for Public Health Practice**

Arkansas Assessment Initiative (AR-AI)

Description: The Arkansas Assessment Initiative will strive to improve the processes and outcomes of community health assessments to enable us to complete community health assessments that yield the most comprehensive, valid, and reliable picture of the health in all of our communities.

Funded by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for approximately \$1.25 million over 5 years.

Purpose:

The AR-AI is a cooperative effort that joins people and organizations in the search of the best possible information concerning community health assessments. Historically, traditionally gathered census demographic information and information gathered through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) and the Youth Risk Factor Survey (YRBS) have been used to produce a data set for each county. This method creates a challenge as throughout Arkansas (and nationally) cell phone usage has increased, while fewer people have land lines at home. The method may also exclude migrant and immigrant populations whose primary language is not English.

Major goals and objectives:

- To assist in improving our understanding of health status and disease burden in *all* components of our diverse population
- To address the culture and language of each community being surveyed
- To improve the processes and outcomes of community health assessments to enable us to complete community health assessments that yield the most comprehensive, valid, and reliable picture of the health in all of our communities.

Project Staff:

Andi Ridgway, MS, RD, LD, CDE, Principal Investigator
 Cheryl LeDoux, MPH, Senior Epidemiologist
 Emily Harris, MPH, Program Manager

Benefits for Arkansas:

A basic or baseline understanding of the community's health is vitally important before any new policies or interventions are implemented. Without accurate information on the health status of a community and a clear understanding of the available resources, we cannot make informed decisions about which areas should have priority, which policies might be effective, or which interventions might be possible to implement. Cost and effectiveness must be evaluated to determine how and which programs are supported and continued.

This five year CDC grant funding not only enables ADH and HHI to create the Arkansas Assessment Initiative, but also to provide the mechanism with which to share the information gained concerning improved community health assessments processes with other states and organizations so that they may be assisted in successfully meeting this challenging aspect of Public Health.

Contact Emily Harris, Program Manager at 501-280-4692 or Emily.Harris@arkansas.gov

Arkansas Department of Health Hometown Health Improvement Initiative



All counties have HHI Coalitions/Initiatives/planning groups
 Surveys completed:
ADULT - County Adult Health Survey (formerly known as BRFSS)
YOUTH - County Youth Health Survey (formerly known as YRBS)



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